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ABSTRACT

Individualized instructional packages are an approach to learning through independent study, integrated experiences, and multimedia. The implementation of individualized instructional packages into a course should include provision for a general assembly session in which the students become acquainted with the instructor who will later appear on tape, in pictures, or similar media; an independent study session which is supervised by the instructor; and an integrated quiz session to provide effective feedback to the students. Using individualized instructional packages, the instructor may achieve greater teaching flexibility than under the conventional approach to learning. (JY)

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INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION THROUGH INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ronald S. Brugman

Individualized instructional packages are an approach to learning through independent study, integrated experiences, and multi-media. Sometimes this method of instruction is referred to as coordinated instruction, audio tutorial, or multi-media. An essential component of this method of learning involves Instructional Development.

Both the instructor and the student should be concerned with the kinds of activities and situations which contribute to learning. Once these activities and situations can be identified, the instructor is obliged to provide a course structure which will permit the student to engage in these activities and the student is obliged to perform them conscientiously. Some of these activities and situations are:

1. Repetition of information
2. Concentration on one area
3. Association for learning facilitation
4. Presentation of appropriate size units of subject matter
5. Coordination of the communication vehicle to the instructional objective
6. The use of multi-media
7. The integration of learning activities and situations into a system of instruction

Individualized Instructional Packages are developed to aid in the adjustment for the diversity of backgrounds among students. This multi-media sensory approach utilizes audio tapes, video tapes, texts, manuals, films, activities, and experimentation.

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The implementation of Individualized Instructional Packages into a course could be structured to include:

General Assembly Session - This is the same as the conventional lecture system where the instructor is in charge. At this session the students become acquainted with the instructor who will later appear on tape, in pictures or similar media.

The General Assembly Session may be a non-mandatory session which the entire multi-media class will attend. This session may be used for:

1. Establishing the personality of the course
2. Orientation
3. Presenting guest lectures
4. Showing films
5. Enlarging and enriching the basic course, such as presentation and analysis of data concerning problems which are significant to the unit under study but too specific for inclusion in the conventional lecture
6. For preview and review as needed

Independent Study Session - during supervised self instructional learning, the student checks in when convenient for as long or as often as is needed or desired.

During a typical session, the student listens, reads, writes, experiments, observes, and goes to a demonstration area. This is accomplished under the supervision of the instructor whose voice on the tape programs a sequence of learning events. The student's earphones insure the focus of attention is on the subject and minimizes possible disturbances. Through hearing, sight, and touch, the student participates in the learning experience.

If the student has difficulty absorbing the material, the taped discussion may be replayed as often as necessary. If the student has additional questions, the instructor may give assistance without slowing down the remainder of the class.

Integrated Quiz Session - a modified seminar and oral quiz which is also an effective tool for preventing procrastination on the part of students. It involves students seated informally around a table with an instructor.

The integrated quiz session is an effective feed back mechanism for checking the success or failure of any program sequence and can provide clues for improving the approach. The student generally is engaged in discussion or oral presentation during this type of session.

The use of individualized instructional materials raises the question of the possible elimination of personal contact which is important for motivation. This type of instruction actually enhances personal contact, since much of the routine teaching is relegated to a routine vehicle. The instructor's time may now be devoted to meaningful personal contact.

Individualized Instructional Packages are generally used in supervised learning centers in which facilities, equipment, and materials are provided for independent study. The student sets the pace to achieve mastery of the learning experiences provided in the center. By means of audio tape recordings for individual listening, a great variety of learning experiences can be integrated in a logical systematic program of instruction. Through the audio tape, the instructor becomes a private tutor for each student. The message may be repeated as often as necessary.

An individual instructional system places the emphasis on student learning. This method ideally accommodates students with a wide diversity of background information, learning skills, aptitudes, and interests. The responsibility for learning and the mechanics of scheduling may be placed upon the student. The instructor is left free for the real business of teaching--orientation, direction, elucidation, guidance, and personal contact with each student to inspire and motivate.

An individualized instructional center may consist of a number of student study stations or carrels each with equipment and instructional materials required for the current lesson. Ideally, a tape player with headphones, a film projector, and a slide projector should be at each station. The number of stations depends upon the number of students in the course, the average number of hours per week each student uses the materials, and the number of hours per week the center is open for student use.

Instructors and students benefit from this type of individualized approach. The students individual differences or scholastic aptitude, personal background and interests are taken into account. The instructor's ideas of what subject matter is to be emphasized, how much content should be presented to the students, and how the students can best be taught are all considered.

The instructor may achieve greater teaching flexibility than under the conventional approach to learning. There is flexibility to structuring the course to meet the student's differences, thus providing personal satisfaction. There is flexibility in selection multi-media instructional materials to supplement course content for a totally integrated approach to learning, and there is flexibility in adapting and changing a course to meet any desired requirements.

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